

A LETTER

sent by a Gentleman of England,
to his frende, contayning a confutation
of a French mans errors, in the repore
of the myraculous starre nowe
shyninge.

Anno Domini. 1573.





It, whereas ye requyre my
oppyinion touching y^e French
Pamflet of a blasing starre
lately Englished : Surely
I cannot but condempne y^e
rashnes of him that did translate y^e same,
for that at one time he offered two iniu-
ryes . First to the French man y^e made
the same , for whom it had beene suffici-
ente that Fraunce had knowen bys do-
tinges, & not England also to haue bene
made partaker of his follies . Secondly
the ill oppinion hee seemed to haue of his
owne countryemen, that amonge the a-
bundant choise of so many excellent Ma-
thematicians , woulde rather publishe
such a toy, then vse thaduise of suche as
mighte haue taughte a veritye . For the
Booke although it haue fewe lines, yet
hath it manye errors & that of all sortes,
Geometricall, Astronomicall, Physical,
Cosmographicall and Historicall . First
in the portrayture of Cassiopeia the very
starres are mistaken, and the new starre
misplaced . For the three other starres

that frame a figure wth hym of Geo-
mitricianes commbly called Rhombus,
are these, one of the thirde lighte in her
breste, an other of the same lighte in her
chayze nighe vnto the thighe of Cassio-
peia, the thirde in the middle ascense o^r
backe of her Chaire, this beinge of the
thirde light also, is by him quite mispla-
ced, and in steede thereof another little
starre of the fiftie lighte placed, and the
newe starre that is beneath the foote of
her seate, is there situate farre higher.
Hee wanteth also one starre in the toppe
of her chayze, and an other in her foote,
and notwithstandinge he hath clapte in
one where neuer anye was, yet wanteth
hee one of his number, which although
hee had neuer redbbe Aratus Ptolomey,
Copernicus o^r other Mathematicianes,
yet of Poetes as Palingenius, he might
haue learned howe Cassiopeia decem at-
q; tribus stat lucida flammis. Hee pro-
ceedeth to his obseruations, and decla-
reth this newe starres distances from
Alrucuba commonlye called the Pole
starre, and another of Queene Cassio-
peia, inferringe that such as be skilfull in
the

the doctrine of triāgles Sphericall, will
soone finde his place to be in the ende of
X about the 29. grade, wherby it appea-
reth that his own knowledge in Spheri-
call triangles was verye small, for ad-
mittinge his owne distances true, it fal-
leth out in þ first face of X, but his true
longitude and place in deede, is eslye by
sighte without Instrumente within one
degree to be coniectured, of the meanest
scholler in obseruations Astronomical,
beinge moze then that In sedis pede, a
little starre harde by hym whose longi-
tude by Copernicus is deliuered 8. gra-
des .20. minutes, and lesse then that o-
ther by hym mencioned in Cassiopeia
her thighe whose longitude is also .10.
grades. This starre therfore being ve-
rye nigh in the meane betweene these
two, is soone founde within 10. minutes
of nyne grades in longitude, makinge
accompete as Copernicus doth from the
little starre in the hoze of the Ramme,
which in the olde Astronomers tyme
Roode in the very interfection of the line
Ecliptike and Equinoctial, but sitgens
by the stealinge course of the starres
fixed,

fixed, or rather of the earth as Copernicus with better reasons proueth, is remoued since that time 27. grades 49. minutes, which I haue by certaine Calculatiō found to be Precessio Aequinoctiorum vera, for the Natiuitie of oure Sauour last past, nyne grades therfore the longitude of this newe starre in the eyghte sphere by sighte onely collected, as I haue before declared, vnto þ number of the true Præcession adioyned, produceth 6. grades 49. minutes in & for his longitude or place, and therefore I muse the more that anye man shoulde so muche erre þ woulde presume in a cause Mathematicall to wyte, but perhappes his meaninge was þ this starres righte Ascension shoulde be about that grade, wherein though it be very vnproper to apply the Computation of right Ascension to the line Ecliptike, yet had his error bene that way the lesse, but not contented wyth these inferioure causes beinge in deede but Elementa artis, hee ascendeth to discouer a Parallaxe, & produceth obseruations flatte repugnaunt betweene theynselfes. I meane not so muche

much for that hee giueth his new starre
seuerall distances from Alrucuba at his
greatest heighte, (which in deede is no-
thinge so) but hee attributeth also vnto
hym hys greatest Parallaxe aboue the
Pole, and his lesser vnderneath, whiche
is a matter so absurde, as oure Mathe-
maticall infantess will laughe to scozne.
And these hee sayth are the principall
matters hee noted in hym since hys first
apparaunce the 15 of Nouember, wher-
in his credite may something be doubted
also, cōsidering others of as good iudge-
ment as he seemeth to bee, obseruinge &
same figure of Cassiopeia coulde see no
such starre the 16. night of the same mo-
neth: His Mathematicall causes thus
handled he entereth to iudge of & effects
ensuing, and for discouery thereof tran-
slateth the opinions of other writers cō-
cerning Comets, which by Aristotle in
his booke of Meteores are asseymed to
be in the Region of the ayre, and wythin
the concauitye of the Moones Orbe in-
gendred, asseyming them to be nourished
wyth vapours and resolutions from the
ball of earth and Occene, and theretore
rather

rather to signifie then to cause scarcity
and sterility ensuinge, but by this Auc-
tors owne Parallaxis allowing him his
owne witnessses, they giue it to be aboue $\frac{1}{2}$
Moone, as any mā may know that hath
any meane sight, I say not in Spherickes
triangles, but plaine and righte lined, &
therefore vlesse he will make war with
naturall Philosophers and explode A-
ristotle, he cannot terme hym a Comet.
Also Comets are into thre kindes deu-
ded, Crinitas, Barbatas & Caudatas: And
this surely by any sound sight to be wel
founde none of them: for though hee do
suppose it hath a tayle recching into the
Orient, wherebpyon hee foundeth hys
phantasticall diuinations. Trulpe the
Starre is troubled wyth no such thinge,
howsoeuer his head was at the viewing
thereof. Againe whereas hee coniectu-
reth by his imagined tayle, that his ef-
fect should fall out in the Orient & East
partes of $\frac{1}{2}$ world, he seemeth also there-
in to be as neuer a Cosinographer, that
knoweth not no part of the worlde to be
East or West simplye or of it selfe: But
the thing he harpeth on and hath belike
hard

harde some talke of, as of the Parallaxe also, is this: Astronomers first by the signe wherein the Comet is, his Parallele, his situation in respect of the intersection of the Horizon and Meridian, his latitude, and by many other meanes also pronounce first of þ prouinces whereon they effect shal light, and then by the direction of the tayle iudge of the parts of those prouinces and the countreyes adioyninge, and so in respecte of some one place determined, others may be called East or West, Occident or Orient, at pleasure. Againe where he pronounceth horrible effects alway to ensue Comets, Histories would haue taught hym that sometime they promise vnto some great felicitye, as Iustine when he speaketh of the Comet at Methridates byrth sayth: Huius quoq; viri magnitudinem Coelestia portenta nuntiabant, and at þ inuasiõ of Tamberlane, that famous Captayne that toke the Turke and banquished his Empyre (ascending by militare vertue from base estate) had also a Comet which is noted to signifye his felicitye. But had al his Physicall Collecti-
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ong beene true, yet briefly are the signi-
fications of Comets applyed to starres,
or Phenomena that are aboute the Re-
gion Elementare. To conclude because
you requyre my opinion of the booke &
the Authoys knowledge &c. For þ mat-
ter as ye may perceiue, it is farced so ful
of errors apparant, that euery one that
sauoureth any thing in the sciences Ma-
thematical, shal sone finde them. Of the
man I cannot iudge but ab affectu, and
so take hys audacity much moze then ei-
ther his learning, or his descretion, that
would presume to put himselfe in pzease
to tell a tale in pzeence of such a nōber of
Geometers, Philosophers, Astronomers
Cosmographers, and that of a matter in
part concerninge all they sciences, and
proceede so weekely furnished. It had
beene better for him to haue first redde
Erasinus Apothegmata, wher he shold
haue founde howe Apelles to a Sculpa-
ker that presumed to talke in his science
lest this prouerbe Ne sutor ultra crepi-
dam, which well noted might haue cau-
sed this Auctour to content hymselfe to
loke on, and geue others leaue to playe þ
part

part on the Mathematicall stage.

His conclusion is not to be disliked for that it containeth both piety & veritie, & no doubt it is as he sayth a forewarning of Gods inscrutable pleasure, which will fall out to be no lesse straung and myraculous in effect, then this signe wherby it is forewarned is rare and supernaturall, I commend therefore herein his modestye, that he would not geue iudgemente whether the same shoulde happen in Fraunce or els where. For surely it were hard for a man of greater science then hee seemeth to bee, so to doe: But wheresoeuer any haynous outrage hath bene comitted, eyther by great or small, heade or foote, they haue as hee trulye collecteth, greate cause to stande in horrour of this myraculous signe, as a forerunner of Gods iust Iudgemente. And thus exhortinge you to proceede in the passinge pleasaunte studies of the noble sciences Mathematicall fit onely for fre and noble mindes that stoupe not at filthy lucre I commit you to the protection, of the Almightye.

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